C. Remarks

Independent claim 8 is the sole claim pending in the subject application. Claim 8 has been amended to clarify the invention. Support for the amendment may be found, *inter alia*, in the specification at paragraphs [0036] and [0037], as well as in Figs. 2 and 4. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of claim 8 is respectfully requested.

Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being obvious from U.S. Patent No. 6,713,201 B2 (Bullock) in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0096144 A1 (Dunstan). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Prior to addressing the merits of the rejection, Applicants would like to briefly discuss some of the features of the present invention. That invention, in pertinent part, relates to a fuel supply system for fuel cells, which comprises a fuel cell that generates power using fuel and oxygen and discharges water produced as a result of power generation, and a fuel supply apparatus for supplying fuel to the fuel cell. The fuel cell comprises a fuel cell supply unit into which fuel is supplied and a water discharging unit for discharging water, wherein access to the fuel supply unit and the water discharging unit is provided at the same face of the fuel cell.

The fuel supply apparatus includes a mounting unit for mounting the fuel cell, a fuel supply unit for supplying fuel to the mounted fuel cell, and a water-suctioning unit for suctioning water produced inside the fuel cell. The fuel cell supply apparatus also includes a detecting switch for detecting the mounting of the fuel cell and a switch for starting to supply the fuel.

Importantly, the switch for starting to supply the fuel is provided separately from the detecting switch. As a result, it is possible to start supplying the fuel from a fuel tank after it has been confirmed that the fuel cell has been mounted, i e., the fuel flow can be initiated after mounting and not necessarily contemporaneously with the detection of mounting. The use of such a separate switch reduces the chances of a fuel leak.

The Examiner alleged that claim 8 reads on the apparatus disclosed in Bullock, because a spring-loaded valve in the fuel outlet connector 152 structured as shown in Figs. 4 and 5 reads on the claimed detecting switch. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Figs. 4 and 5 in Bullock depict a spring-loaded valve, which opens to initiate the fuel flow as the connection with the fuel cell is established. This device is fundamentally different from the presently claimed system with a detecting switch in that a connection of the fuel cell in Bullock automatically initiates fuel flow, whereas in the present invention it is possible to initiate fuel flow after the connection is made. Specifically, fuel flow in accordance with the present invention is initiated using a separately provided switch. In any event, even if assumed, *arguendo*, that the spring-loaded valve in Bullock can be deemed a detecting switch, Bullock does not disclose or suggest a switch for initiating fuel flow, which is provided separately from the detecting switch.

Dunstan does not cure the deficiencies of Bullock. Dunstan, like Bullock, fails to disclose or suggest a fuel cell supply apparatus comprising a detecting switch and a separately provided switch for starting to supply the fuel. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that

Bullock, whether considered alone or in combination with Dunstan, fails to render the presently claimed invention unpatentable.

Wherefore, withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and passage of the subject application to issue are respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

/Jason M. Okun/
Jason M. Okun
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No.: 48,512

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

FCHS_WS 2804265v1